ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system and method which enables a provider network to run a loop detection protocol in a customer network communicably coupled to it. The provider network runs a loop detection protocol and the customer network either runs a different protocol or none. The provider network determines its root bridge, or designated customer bridge, which is used to control loop detection decisions for the customer network. A BPDU or other protocol packet received from the customer network is tunneled through the provider network to the designated customer bridge. The designated customer network then processes the received BPDU in accordance with a loop detection instance for the customer network. The designated customer bridge then produces control messages in response to the processing and forwards those messages to the customer network. The control messages may include port state controls for ports in the customer network.

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